NEWS PHOTO BY JACK STUBBS

Clair Simons pauses in front of the "Barlow House" at 2441 Rawsonville Road

Rawsonville

AA 1-31-1982

Village boomed during Civil War

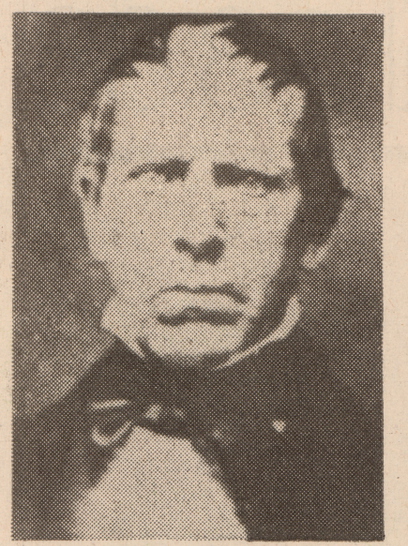
By William B. Treml
NEWS STAFF REPORTER

YPSILANTI – For most motorists sweeping along I-94 east of Ypsilanti, Rawsonville Road is only another blur of exit ramp, a glimpse of a shopping center, one more byway leading off a busy expressway.

Few who roar past on their way to or from Detroit know that Rawsonville Road once was the path which led to a flourishing pioneer community, a village larger than Ypsilanti or Ann Arbor.

That community was recalled for historians several years ago when Cathy Stromme Horste and Diane Follmer Wilson completed two years of research to create a book "Water Under The Bridge", a history of Van Buren Township.

In a chapter entitled " Rawsonville, The Vanished Community", the authors recount the beginnings- and ending--- of the village. Much of the material in this article is drawn from the Horste-Wilson book.



AMARIAH RAWSON

ONE OF THOSE who has not forgotten Rawsonville is Clair S. Simons, long-time assessor and currently a consultant for Ypsilanti Township. A history buff, Simons was instrumental in the drawing up of a joint resolution which recognized the historical significance of the dead village. The resolution was signed by members of the boards of Ypsilanti and Van Buren Townships.

Simons recently accompanied Ann Arbor News Photographer Jack Stubbs on a tour of buildings still standing on the site of the village. One of the stops was made at the remains of the old Rawsonville Inn and another at the home of Wendy Dixon, wife of James Dixon, whose parents were descendents of original Rawsonville settlers.

The Dixons live in a house which once was a gathering spot for those settlers. The dwelling orginally was the Good Templars Social Hall and later was used by the Ladies Helping Hand Society of the vil-

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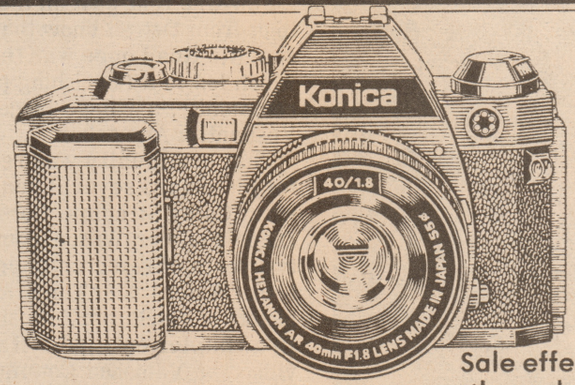

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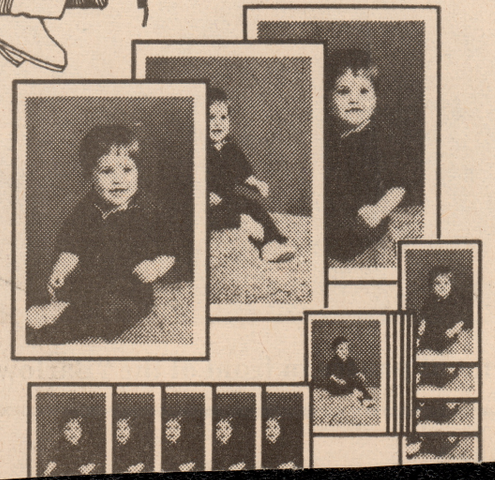
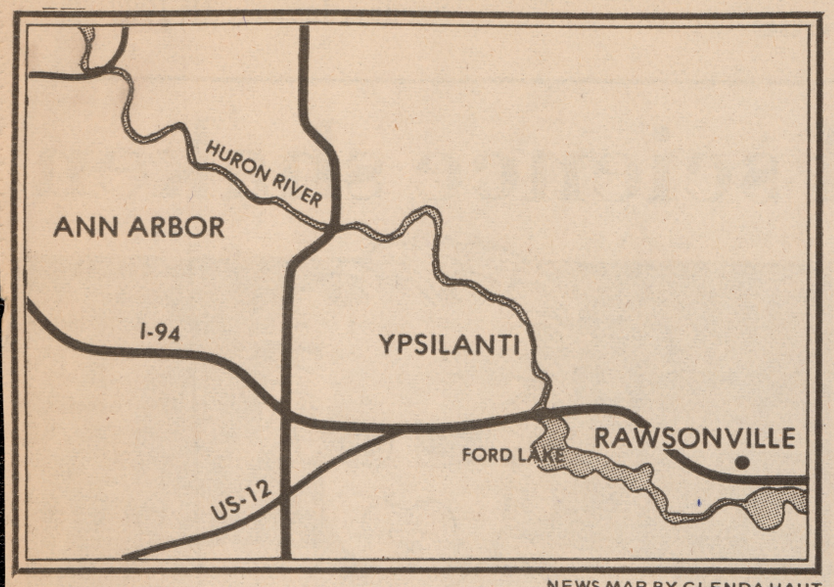


Rawsonville...



NEWS MAP BY GLENDA HAUT

NEWS PHOTO BY JACK STUBBS

Guests staying at the Rawsonville Inn once stabled their horses in this barn

Continued from Page B-1

lage.

Dixon's parents lived in a nearby house believed to have been built by the son of one of the founders of Rawsonville.

The modern Rawsonville Road took its name from the village, once a frontier settlement which came into being in the early 1820s under the name of Snow's Landing. The 'landing' was just that, a docking place for lines of flat-bottomed boats traveling back and forth on the Huron River from Detroit. The boats, some of which could carry as much as 20 tons of freight, transported supplies and building materials from Lake Erie communities to the 'landing' and returned to Detroit laden with furs and handicraft products.

SNOW'S LANDING was founded out of necessity. In the first decade of the 19th century Michigan roads, spanning westward from Detroit, were little more than widened paths, dust-filled in the summer and virtually impassable with mud and snow in the winter. It was not uncommon for wagons literally to lose their wheels as clay rolled up and clogged wheels with the heavy layers of mud. The road conditions were particulary troublesome to a Maine farmer, Henry Snow, who migrated to Michigan with his wife, Sally, and their children looking for land. Snow was the third person to receive a land grant from the Michigan territorial government for a tract in Van Buren Township, Wayne County. The Maine native selected a section of land in Section 19, an area now bordered by Rawsonville Road on the west and Textile Road on the south. The area is south and across the Huron River from I-94.

The edge of Snow's land lay on the Huron River, jutting out into the water and forming a natural approach for river traffic. Snow erected a home for his family and then a sawmill to process lumber from the nearby forests. He also bought additional land across Rawsonville Road in Washtenaw County.

Soon the flat-bottomed boats of commerce were sailing up to "Snow's Landing" to unload supplies from Detroit for the pioneer families then settling the area. They returned downriver with the furs the trappers produced from their runs, lumber and products made in the primative industries then starting up.

BUT DESPITE his flourishing community, Henry Snow was restless and dissatisfied. In 1825 he abruptly sold his sawmill and farm and moved on.

As Snow was moving out, a new settler was moving in.

His name was Amariah Rawson, a veteran of the War of 1812 and a native of Walworth County in upper New York state. Snow, with his wife, Betsy, and their six young daughters and infant son, traveled the long journey from New York to the Michigan territory in a covered wagon pulled by a team of oxen. The Rawsons first inspected farmland in the Saline area before deciding to begin their new life in the west at Snow's Landing.

Rawson bought 160 acres of land on the south bank of the Huron River, erecting the village's second sawmill and clearing land to start a lumber business.

In 1836 with the help of two other settlers, Abraham Voorheis and Matthew Woods, Rawson filed a plat of Snow's Landing with government authorities and at the same time petitioned to have the name of the village officially changed to "Michigan City." The petition was granted but three years later a group of the settlers, impressed by Rawson's leadership role in community affairs, asked the newly-formed state legislature to approve another name change for their hamlet. Their selection was "Rawsonville" in honor of Amariah Rawson. On March 22, 1839 the legislature approved the change and the village became "Rawsonville."

BECAUSE OF ITS ideal location for river traffic, Rawsonville became a prosperous community. Rothwell's Inn, built in the 1830s on the north bank of the Huron River in Washtenaw County, became an important part of the village. Travelers going up or down the river stopped at the sprawling inn at the landing for a meal or an overnight stay. Stagecoach passengers also used the Rothwell and horses for the stages were quaratered in the inn's barns. Indians traded furs there and the "main room" of the inn served as a gathering place for the community. Today a wooden barn, part of the original inn structure, still stands on the site, the only reminder of more prosperous days.

Rawsonville reached its peak of economic growth during the Civil War era. At that time there were two cooper shops (barrel-making), a sawmill, a grist mill, a stove factory, three blacksmiths, a distillery for rye whiskey, a cheese factory, a wagon maker, drygoods and general stores and three saloons.

An estimated 1,000 persons lived in Rawsonville's 150 homes at that time.

But the bypassing of the pioneer village by the railroad line was to be the death knell for the tiny community. While plans for running rail lines to and through Rawsonville were discussed as early as 1836, the final decision by railroad planners, made in the late 1870s, was to go around the village.

In 1881 the Wabash Railroad ran its first train through Van Buren Township, the line running three miles south of Rawsonville. A depot was built at Belleville. Three miles north of Rawsonville, the Michigan Central Railroad, constructed its tracks and thus the village was entirely bypassed by the steel tracks.

WITH FLATBOATING along the Huron a thing of the past, inadequate approach roads and no railroad, the prosperity which once belonged to Rawsonville faded.

Abandoned houses became commonplace and, during the 1880s, ramshackle dwellings could be seen scattered over the hillsides in the village area. The community's last grist mill, owned by Edwin Barlow, was washed away in the spring of 1901 when melting snow caused the Huron to flood, smashing the village dam. With the dam gone the river itself deteriorated and Rawsonville's fate was sealed.

The final blow came in 1929 when the Detroit Edison Company completed work on a dam across the Huron River.

The village as it was remains only in the data and history notes of history buffs like Clair Simons, Cathy Horste and Diane Wilson.

All else has vanished with the years.

The Ann Arbor News

Features

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Section B
Sunday, January 31, 1982

The problem of doctored data

Honesty is presumed in scientific research. But, because progress is built brick by brick, each brick is tested again and again. The procedure turns up shoddy and sometimes deceiful work. And while falsity is exposed, it eats up incredible man-hours of work and tarnishes the repute of the white lab coat.

U-M relies on staff ethics

By Max Gates
NEWS SCIENCE REPORTER

A California researcher argued he was such a workaholic that he had taken his data on a picnic and lost it when a rowboat capsized.

Another reportedly mugged himself and vandalized his own office to account for missing data.

There have been non-scientific abuses which have also been damaging to science's reputation.

A University of Wisconsin pathologist lost his job, was fined $4,000 and placed on six months probation after he was convicted of using federal research grant funds for two ski trips.

And in perhaps the most famous case, John Buettner-Janusch, a widely-respected physical anthropologist, was convicted in July, 1980, of selling quaaludes, LSD and synthetic cocaine made in his research laboratory at New York University.

THE PROBLEM of cheating in research has also cropped up at the University of Michigan, though not in the medical sciences.

In October, 1980, University re-

DR. ALAN PRICE

ing that both the department and an international mineralogical society had originally accepted it as a new mineral.

However, when Crook was asked back to Ann Arbor in September, 1979, to reproduce his data, he was unable to do it, the department said. Based on that test, the department's adminstrator attorney Peter Davis of Ann Arbor.

THE CROOK CASE is the only incident of scientific fraud which has come to public attention at the University in recent years, according to Dr. Alan Price, assistant vice president for research. Price admitted, however, that it is impossible to monitor the work of the thousands of researchers on the U-M campus.

"We depend on the ethics of the faculty and the staff," Price said. "We can't stand beside somebody and check everything they do."

All grants proposals from University researchers must be approved by department chairmen, deans and the office of the vice president for research, the chief mechanism for reviewing the ethics and credibility of research, Price said.

Price expressed confidence in the process known in the scientific community as peer review, in which the grant proposals and publications of researchers are assessed by their colleagues around the country and the world.

"Peer review of grant proposals

House of science shaken

By Paul Raeburn
AP SCIENCE WRITER

NEW YORK (AP) – He was a graduate student, at 24 regarded as one of Cornell's most promising researchers, a standout in Prof. Richard McCarty's biochemistry section at the university.

What Mark Spector had done had set scientists engaged in cancer research agog.

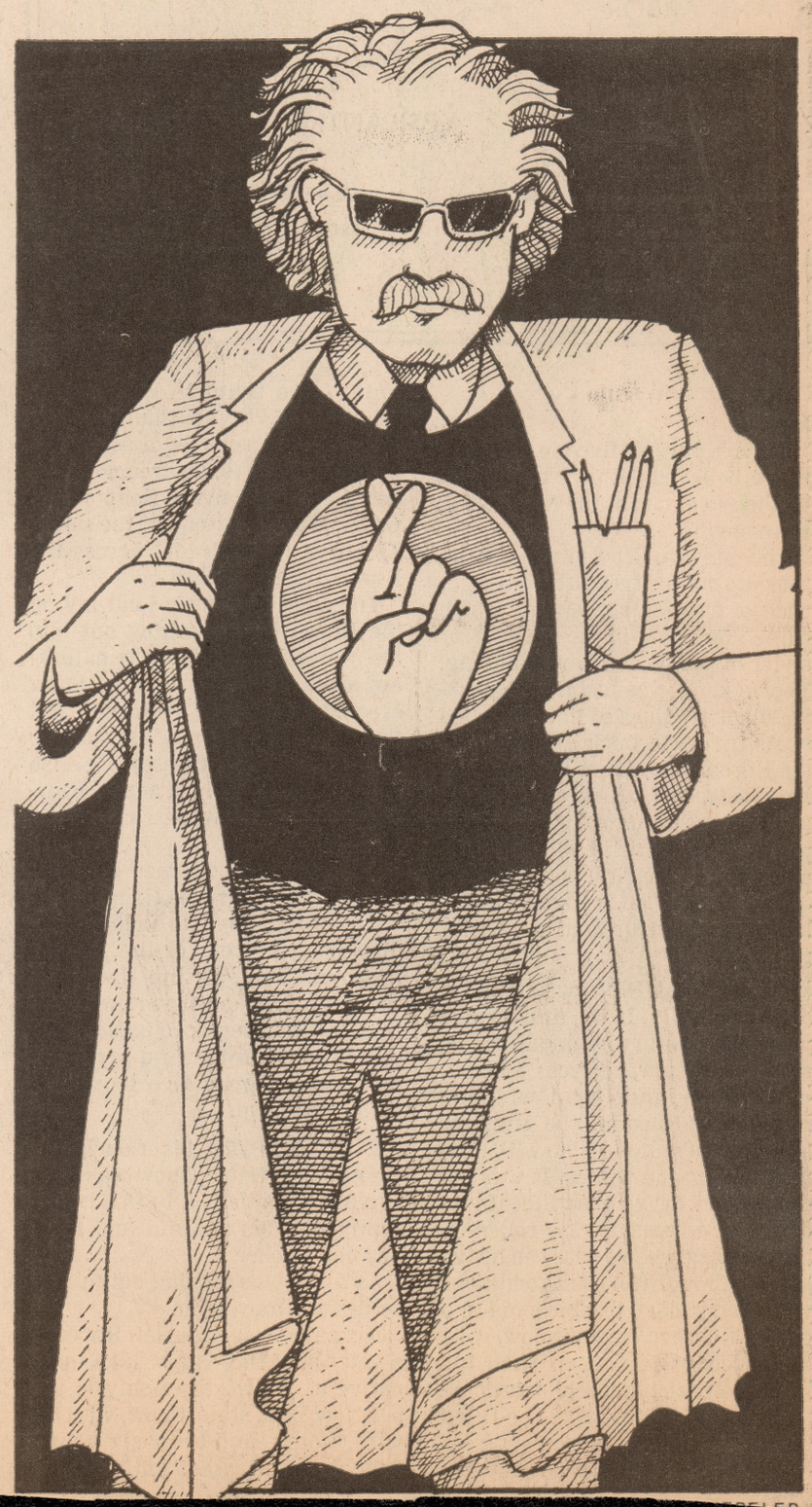
And for a long while, Prof. McCarty looked on Spector with the pride of a coach in a star quarterback.

Then last spring, McCarty's concern gave way to unease. Evidence was mounting that Spector might have committed one of the cardinal sins of science – doctored data.

Two Cornell professors, Efraim Racker and Volker Vogt, had been trying for a year-and-a-half without success to duplicate Spector's experiments. They nervously joked that Spector had "golden hands."

SPECTOR'S 16-HOUR days in the laboratory had produced, in a very short time, evidence for a cascading series of chemical changes in normal cells of the body. The changes might explain how normal cells become cancerous – a discovery of great importance if true.

Last summer, Vogt made a painful discovery. Spector had used a radioactive isotope of iodine as a tracer in an experiment where he should have used phosphorous.

Spector was isolating proteins from various cells, to identify the chemical changes in the cells. The isotopes, which combine with certain proteins but not others, were used to identify the proteins that were being isolated. Use of the wrong isotope completely alters the experimental results.

Vogt told the others what Spector had done. He couldn't believe that the wrong isotope was a mere mistake. The data had been deliberately falsified. Spector strenuously denied